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THE FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE CHOICE OF THE PLACE OF LIVING

Abstract. Many people have certain problems with the choice of the place of living. The main idea of this article is to study the aspects of urban area environment which effect on this decision. The influence of these factors is analyzed on example of two cities: the big one and the small one.

Keywords: place of living, urban area, cities.

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ВНЕШНЯЯ СРЕДА КАК ФАКТОР ВЫБОРА МЕСТА ПРОЖИВАНИЯ

Аннотация. Многие люди имеют определенные проблемы при выборе места жительства. Основной идеей данной статьи является изучение аспектов городской окружающей среды, которые влияют на выбор места проживания людей. Влияние этих факторов анализируется на примере двух городов: один большой и один маленький по градостроительной классификации.

Ключевые слова: место жительства, окружающая среда, города.

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Introduction

Satisfaction with the external environment is a key factor for the person to make choice of the place of living. In the last few decades in our country there is the population outflow from the “small” cities and its accumulation in “the largest” cities [1]. In a conventional vocabulary “largest” cities (with the population greater than 1 million) are referred to as big cities. From the point of urban development, “big” are settlements with a population of 100 to 250 thousand people, and the cities of one million people are called “the largest” [2].

The problem is that due to the outflow of labor resources from big cities the development of their territory slows down, because the people who went to the largest cities are engaged in maintenance and development of the last mentioned in the future.

In “the largest” cities, this process causes problems of overpopulation, and in small, medium and big cities it causes the shortage of skilled workers, both in the field of intellectual and physical labor.

In this article we study the influence of the external environment on the urban residents of the cities on example of two settlements: Yekaterinburg — a representative of “the largest” city and Berezniki, which is related to the group of “big” cities considering its urban development. Problems of “small” and “medium-sized” cities

basically are similar to the problem of “big” city, but they are more acute and serious to them.

As a factual basis for the analysis of decrease/growth of the population in the “big” city we use data of Federal Service of State Statistics on the results of two Russian Population Census in 2002, 2010 (see Table) [3, 4].

Population decrease in Berezniki, 2002–2010

Data	2002 year	2010 year
Berezniki population	175,297	156,831

Census data does not take into account the difference between births and deaths. According to the census of 2010, the decrease of the Russian population in the period from 2002 to 2010 was 1.6%. We assume that for Berezniki the population decrease corresponded to the Russian average.

We define the change in the number of Berezniki residents as:

$$N_{\text{population}}^{\text{year}} = N_{\text{population}}^{2010} - N_{\text{population}}^{2002} + \frac{N_{\text{population}}^{2002} \times 1,6\%}{100\%}$$

where

$N_{\text{population}}^{2002}$ — population of the city according to the 2002 census, number of inhabitants;

$N_{population}^{2010}$ – population of the city according to the 2010 census, number of inhabitants;

1,6 % – population decrease in Russia during the period from 2002 up to 2010, number of inhabitants.

$$N_{population}^{year} = 156831 \text{ population} - 175297 \text{ population} + \frac{175297 \text{ population} \times 1,6\%}{100\%} = 15\,662 \text{ population}$$

Let us consider the parameters of the external environment, which may be possible reasons for the population departure from the “big” cities.

1. Telecommunications

Internet development takes place in parallel in the “big” and “the largest” cities. The difference lies only in the access speed. In “the largest” cities it is more than 100 Mbit, and in the “big” cities it is up to 10–50 Mbit. But the already existing speed of Internet connections, as well as active 3G and 4G (LTE) networks development by mobile operators, is enough to teach people even through video tutorials, i. e. there is no limitation on the self-education process. The inhabitants have access to the global scale information. The authors have no significant reason to believe that this parameter has an impact on the choice of residence.

2. Greater number of vacancies

“Big City is a place of great opportunities.” Here, as a rule, this metaphor is valid. The key word is an “opportunity.” In absolute terms, the number of vacancies and jobs in “the largest” city, of course, is greater. But in this case we should consider the number of available positions per one inhabitant. This question seems specific according to certain parameters [5]. In Russia, there are cities that specialize in a particular activity, the so-called monotowns. The existence of such single-industry cities is typical not only for Russia [6]. In such towns the choice of profession is quite limited. In turn “the largest” city offers a greater range of popular production and business occupations, but the number of jobs per capita does not exceed this amount in the “big” city.

For example, on January 1, 2015 according to the employment center data [7], the number of vacancies in Yekaterinburg constituted 23,139 positions. There were 0,016 vacancies in average per one city inhabitant.

In Berezniki, according to the employment center data [8], at the beginning of 2015 the number of vacancies constituted 2,268 positions. There were 0,014 vacancies in average per one city inhabitant.

In quantitative terms, the number of vacancies in Yekaterinburg is greater, but the number of vacancies is approximately the same per capita. If in Berezniki this figure was the same than in Yekaterinburg, the number of jobs would have been greater by 310 positions.

Perhaps the variety of the positions offered in “the largest” city is greater than in the “big” one. And, as it is already mentioned, there are cities that specialize on manufacturing of one kind of product, the so-called

monotowns. In these towns the vacancies offered will be of the same type.

Conclusion: The number of vacancies per capita is approximately the same in “the largest” city and in the “big” city. The important factor is migration of the work-

ing age population for seasonal earnings.

3. The level of provided cultural facilities and social amenities

3.1. *Stores.* In the “big” cities fashion brands of clothing or expensive items cannot be easily found. The reason is the high cost of these brands, the low wages level of the bulk of the population and, as a result, small demand for this type of goods.

In the “big” cities, in the presence of the Internet and postal delivery, the active part of the population has access to all the same things as the inhabitants of “the largest” cities. Via Internet it is possible to buy things all over the world and to fit every taste. Physical absence of the shop now does not mean that one cannot purchase any product. At present, the state seeks to control trade carried through the Internet, through the imposition of duties on goods imported from foreign trade platforms and through the limitation of purchases’ sums. In the future, this will lead to a certain prices increase for goods sold over the Internet.

3.2. Theaters, cinemas, museums, exhibition centers

It should be understood that the level of entertainment in “the largest” city is much higher. People occasionally travel to “the largest” city in order to go to the opera; watch a movie in IMAX format, etc.

Let us consider each of these institutions in more detail. A set of cultural and educational purpose objects cannot be placed in each city due to objective reasons. These include the institutions such as opera, ballet, theater of musical comedy, museums, art galleries. This kind of art belongs to the professional (elite) art and, consequently, the demand for it is less than for the mass arts (cinema). The reason for the lower demand is the continuing decline of the population cultural level. The existence of such cultural centers in “the largest” cities is quite justified, and they are occasionally visited by the residents of smaller attracted towns.

There is a different picture of the situation with mass art, i. e. with cinemas. The base in Berezniki has one large cinema hall and a number of small cinema halls. In Yekaterinburg one single cinema “Rolliks” has 5 large and 3 small cinema halls. If we compare the residents’ amount per one hall, in Berezniki one big cinema hall is for 150 thousand inhabitants, while in Yekaterinburg there are 50 large halls per 1.3 million persons. That is 1 hall for 26,000 people.

From the evaluation it is clear that the presence of elite art institutions in the near located city Perm is quite sufficient to the residents of Berezniki to visit them. In

order to meet the population demand for mass art there is need to create a large entertainment center with 6 large cinema halls, it would level up the specific quantity of cinemas in Yekaterinburg and Berezniki per capita.

According to Internet media during the last period of time there is a temporary decline in attendance of cultural, educational and leisure public institutions due to the uncertainty of the economic situation in the country.

4. Facilities for leisure activities for children and teenagers (sports clubs and the leisure clubs)

In Berezniki according to the website of the Committee for physical culture and sport there are about 60 sections of sports orientation. Organizations of additional education is not sporting focus, according to website youth, the city has about 10, with a large number of sections.

5. Obtaining a higher education

Higher education is a necessity. Not all cities have Universities, or the number of occupations is limited. In this regard, high school graduates need to go to the “largest” city for education. Thus, the need for tertiary education leads to an outflow from the city of promising young people. For one part of prospective students, the aim is to gain knowledge and stay in the “major” city is a temporary necessity. For the other part went applicants admission to the University of one of the cities is an opportunity to leave his native city with the subsequent order to remain living in the modern metropolis. The largest city is in the latter case, a kind of “funnel” that sucks personnel potential of “small” and “large” cities, resulting in a problem of shortage of qualified personnel. The conclusion is that the higher professional education is an important factor influencing the decline of socially active population of “small” and “large” cities.

For this reason Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation should review the policy of closing the branches of universities in monotowns and other cities. Even branches of the largest universities such as UrFU, USUE-SINE are being closed. Currently the branch of higher education institute USUE-SINE is being closed in Berezniki [9]. Students are invited to continue training in the headquarters university. It is unknown how many students who left for education will come back to the city for professional activity, and the most importantly, in the future, young people who want to learn a profession taught at this branch will be forced to leave the native city.

Closure of universities branches in monotowns because of their inefficiency creates the problem of skilled specialists’ shortage in these cities.

6. Salary

According to the data of web search engine Yandex average salary in Yekaterinburg constitutes 30 000 rubles, and in Berezniki it is 23 000 rubles [10]. It should be noted that blue-collar occupations prevail in Berezniki since it is industrial city and their wages starts from 13 000 rubles. For young people that begin the world, the

starting salary is highly important. At the same time in Yekaterinburg graduate of construction faculty of university can get a job of engineer of the third category (the initial stage of career) with a salary amount of 25,000 rubles, which is much more.

7. Accommodation

This issue can be seen in different points of view.

7.1. Affordability. In “the largest” city earnings are higher, but the price for one square meter is also more expensive. An average apartment in Yekaterinburg is 3–4 times more expensive than that in Berezniki. In the latter case, accommodation is more available, but, as it was mentioned above, the average income in Berezniki is lower. In this regard, the opportunity of purchasing housing is approximately the same for “the big” and “the largest” cities residents.

7.2. Housing availability. Upgrading of the housing stock is very important. Construction of housing is associated with development and progress. Rates of housing construction in Yekaterinburg show that from 2012 up to 2013 the total area of accommodation has increased by 1,043,900 square meters [11]. In Berezniki 6,300 square meters of housing were put into service for the period of January–September 2013. According to a special project, it is planned to build 250,000 square meters of housing [12, 13], but it is a one-time money allocation due to man-made accident, it does not involve investment in construction on a permanent basis.

Conclusion: the slow pace of updating the housing stock, create a feeling from the lack of development of the city. Hence, people have the desire of resettlement in the city, where the infrastructure development and the emergence of new residential areas. Partially we deal with a vicious circle situation. People go to the “the largest” city, because it has development (i.e. housing construction), but it continues to expand construction rates, as there is inflow of people who need to be provided with accommodation.

Conclusion

Considering the causes of migration to “the largest” cities, yet necessary investments in the development of “small” and “large” cities to reduce this outflow are to be estimated. The problem reviewed requires further in-depth study. Undoubtedly the mere fact of people leaving the sphere of business activity of “the small” and “the big” cities causes economic and demographic damage which is much greater than the volume of state funds invested for their development.

It is important to understand that in case of the complete territory degradation its re-development will cost colossal investments for the regional authorities and for the Government of the Russian Federation.

At the federal government level this problem is known for a long time. The ways to solve it are being searched. In 1996, an alliance of small towns of Russia was founded, as well as a resolution No. 762 “On approval of the

complex Federal program for development of small and medium-sized cities of the Russian Federation in terms of economic reforms” was adopted.

Currently the concept of federal special-purpose program “Social and Economic Development of Small Towns of the Russian Federation for period 2015–2020” is approved by the Russian Federation Government. The program provides complex development of small towns at the city level.

In the authors’ opinion, in order to prevent the population outflow from “the small” and “the big” cities it is necessary to create favorable conditions for life and development. Execution of this task requires programs for strategic development not for a single city, but programs for strategic development of the region as a whole.

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